

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending herein.

By this Amendment, 1, 2, 5 and 7-13 are amended to more clearly claim the subject matter therein and to correct informalities. The specification is also amended to correct informalities. Thus, no new matter is added by this Amendment. Support for the language added to claims 1, 2, 5 and 7-13 may be found at, for example, Figures 5 and 6.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Hyeon at the interview held August 5, 2004, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

I. Objections to the Specification

The disclosure was objected to because the title is allegedly not descriptive and because in paragraph [0030], line 8, "a jumper cable 30" should allegedly be replaced with --a jumper cable 30A--.

With respect to the objection to the title, Applicants herein amend the title to "A Junction Box Having a Plurality of Main Casings and Connectors Designed for Use with Different Types of Automobiles."

With respect to the alleged informality in paragraph [0030] of the specification, Applicants herein amend paragraph [0030] as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants herein similarly amend paragraph [0035], and amend paragraphs [0038] and [0039] to correct informalities.

Applicants submit the requirements of the Patent Office have been met. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections are respectfully requested.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. In particular, the Office Action alleged that the male and female coupling portions are unclear in view of claim 8. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The specification clearly explains that the male coupling portions 17 on the main casing 13, that are not coupled to the female coupling portions 18, may be accommodated in the containing portions 12e of the lower casing member 12. See paragraph [0032] of the present specification.

Further, in order to more clearly claim the subject matter of claim 8, Applicants herein amend claim 8 to recite that "the lower casing member and the main casings are attached via the male coupling portions of the main casings that abut respective containing portions of the lower casing member."

Applicants thus submit claim 8 is enabled by the description in the specification, and one of ordinary skill in the art would have been readily able to make the embodiment of claim 8 without undue experimentation. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,383,035 (Kasai) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,624,280 (Kato) and U.S. Patent No. 6,332,813 (Okabe). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Patent Office alleged that Kasai discloses all of the limitations of the claims except that (1) Kasai does not disclose male and female coupling portions provided on the outer opposite side surfaces of the main casing 12, and (2) an attachment portion 21 for attaching the junction box to a vehicle body. The Patent Office then cited Okabe and Kato as

allegedly curing these deficiencies, respectively. Specifically, the Patent Office alleged that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have modified the junction box taught by Kasai to have male and female coupling portions as taught by Okabe in order to attach a plurality of junction boxes together.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Patent Office is (1) using impermissible hindsight reasoning in making the rejection, and (2) even if the references were to have been combined as suggested by the Patent Office, the presently claimed invention still would not have been achieved.

First, the Patent Office has failed to provide any reason as to why one would have combined a plurality of main casings based on the teachings of Okabe. Here, the Patent Office is clearly using hindsight reasoning, which is impermissible.

Second, combining the teachings of Kasai and Okabe would not have resulted in the presently claimed invention. More specifically, the claims of the present invention recite a junction box having a plurality of main casings, wherein each of the main casings contain male and female coupling portions, wherein the main casings are juxtaposed together by interconnecting the male and female coupling portions successively, and a lower casing member being attached to the main casings.

Kasai merely teaches connector housings 24 which are integrally formed (see Fig. 1 of Kasai). Okabe teaches a joining structure for joining one connector to another connector (see Fig. 1 of Okabe). Kato is merely referenced as allegedly teaching an attachment portion for attaching the junction box to a vehicle body. Accordingly, these references, alone or in combination, merely show connectors attached to each other.

In other words, nowhere do Kasai and/or Okabe teach or suggest main casings, wherein each main casing has a plurality of connectors, and further wherein the main casings

may be coupled to one another and/or to a lower casing member. Further, nowhere does Kato remedy the deficiencies of Kasai and/or Okabe discussed above.

Thus, even if one of ordinary skill in the art were to have combined Kasai, Okabe and/or Kato in the manner alleged by the Patent Office, this would merely have resulted in a plurality of connectors being connected to each other, either by housings that are integrally formed or by a joining structure connecting the connectors. That is, nowhere do Kasai, Okabe and/or Kato teach or suggest a junction box having a plurality of main casings, wherein each of the main casings contain male and female coupling portions, wherein the main casings are juxtaposed together by interconnecting the male and female coupling portions successively, and a lower casing member being attached to the main casings, as recited by claims 1 and 13.

Thus, Kasai, Okabe and Kato, whether alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the subject matter of claims 1-13, or the claims dependent therefrom.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-13 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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